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764 Kwoma culture defines the persons who shall dispose of and mourn for the dead. The relatives of the deceased gather to place his body on a platform where it is exposed for several months. Then the members of the subtribe attend a second funeral, for the ceremonial disposal of the bones, and a feast, after which the adult males celebrate the end of the mourning period at the house tamberan with gong, flute, and dance.

571 These, then, are the variously constituted groups and categories of persons as defined by Kwoma culture. They provide the framework into which a child is born and in terms of which he has to learn to act.

The hamlet in which our house was built, and hence the one from which we gathered most of our information, is called Rumbima. It is situated on a mountain ridge near the geographical center of Hongwam subtribe. (See map.) The men of Rumbima claim descent from the giant fish hawk and hence belong to the *Hagamakwo* sib. They divide themselves into two lineages, the larger claiming descent from the culture hero Mangwiyow, and the smaller from Wasahof.

Mangwiyow is reputed to have had five sons, each of whom sired a family line. Our house was built among the dwellings of the living descendants of these five brothers. The oldest living male in the line whose houses were nearest us was named Wof (household 1, family line 2).[18] He dwelt a few yards from our hut with his first wife Kaya, his levirate wife Chinuwa, his adopted son Mey (a nephew), his adopted daughter Buka (a niece), and his stepson Kum (Chinuwa's son by her former husband). Wof is a man of about forty-five[19] whose skin is grey and scaly from tinea. He has the reputation of being a powerful sorcerer.

Adjacent to Wof's house is the rather dilapidated dwell-

[18] Households are presented both on the map and on the household chart. Family lines may be found on the lineage chart.

[19] Since the Kwoma had no method of counting years, the ages given are rough approximations based on the physical appearance of the individual and on his estimated age at the time of the tribe's first fleeting contact with Europeans, the members of the Behrmann expedition of 1913. (See W. Behrmann, *Im Stromgebiet des Sepik* [Berlin, 1922].)

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dancer, and man of great personal courage. He had two wives, Bora and Kuma, but Bora left him during my stay in the hamlet, taking with her her young daughter Toka. By Kuma he has had three children: Mana and Haya, girls of approximately eleven and eight, and Suw, an infant son. Ham, a nephew, about seven years old, also lives in the household. Kar, the next younger brother, is an intelligent young man in his middle twenties who returned from working in the gold fields just before our arrival and who speaks pidgin English fluently. He has two wives, Difa and Yame, but no children. Kis, the youngest brother, like Kar, worked out a three-year contract in the gold fields and speaks pidgin English. He also has two wives, Sunga and Amba, but no children.

Down another fork in the path, a few rods from the house shared by War, Kar, and Kis, stands that owned by Yat (household 5, family line 1), a stocky, volatile man a year or so older than Kar. He is the only man in the hamlet who has learned pidgin English working in the gold fields and has also taken a head. He has two wives, Kafa and Gege, and one son, Njan (John), born shortly after my arrival at Kwoma. There are no other members of Yat's line living in the hamlet.

Very near Yat's dwelling is one owned by Way (household 6, family line 3), a rather spindly, sneaky man in his forties, who has some reputation as a sorcerer. With him live his wife Mbwimbwi, his two adolescent daughters, Famba and Gwanta, and his two young sons, Merik, just weaned, and Kadowan, a few months old. Way also has taken care of his nephew, Gwamp, ever since the latter's father, Takawur, was driven from the hamlet for attempting to rape War's wife.

About fifty yards down a steep path from Way's house is the dwelling of Waramus (household 8, family line 7), who is about fifty and the oldest man of the hamlet. He is slightly cross-eyed and has a reputation for sorcery equal to that of Wof. With him live his wife Nawa, his eighteen-year-old son Mes, his sixteen-year-old daughter Aya, a young son Kwos, a boy of about eight, and Yimba, who is the wife of Mes and

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CHAPTER II

INFANCY

854 KWOMA infants[1] up to the time they are weaned are never far from their mothers. It is, in fact, very seldom that they are not actually in physical contact [595] with her. Having turned over most of her household duties to [602] her co-wife or some female relative, the mother may hold the child all day and give it her undivided attention. She sits either on the earth floor or on a bark slab under the porch of the family dwelling with the baby nestling on her outstretched legs. At night the infant sleeps cuddled by her side. Whenever she has to move, she carries the child with her cradled in her arm, sitting on her neck, or, less frequently, straddling her hip. The hours that she spends sitting, however, far outnumber the total time spent in standing or walking around with the baby. This is especially true during the first few months, when she considers it dangerous to the child's health to leave the house. If the child appears robust at the end of three or four months, the mother may venture out to the house of a neighbor to visit and show off her infant, but she will not go beyond the limits of the hamlet [754] until the fontanel hardens. This precaution results from the belief that infants are especially susceptible to sorcery before this time and that they should therefore not be subjected to [574] undue risks. For the same reason any visitor except a close relative is unwelcome in a house where there is a newborn [123] infant. Two children were born in the hamlet during my stay, but I was not allowed to see either of them until they were about three months old.[2]

853 Hunger produces one of the earliest and most persistently

[1] The infants from whom most of the data were obtained were Yat's son Njan, who was born a few weeks after my arrival, Way's son Kadowan, who was born a few weeks after Njan, and Suw, the son of War, an infant who was slightly over three years of age, but retarded by yaws and malaria.

[2] This made the observation of infants extremely difficult and accounts in large part for the paucity of data in this chapter.

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putting Súw down and gently urging him to retrieve it. He crawled a few feet toward the ball and then returned to his mother. She took him back into her lap and rocked him in her arms and patted him for a while. She then asked someone for the ball and let Suw play with it. Then she rolled it away again and told him to go get it. This time he retrieved the ball and was again rewarded. During weaning, as we shall see, the strength of this desire to touch and be near the mother is even more clearly demonstrated.

An infant's reaction to the social environment is pleasant but limited. Except for smearing he is rarely punished.* Since, moreover, almost all his needs are satisfied by the help of his mother, he inevitably develops a strong attachment to her. By comparison, other persons are relatively unimportant in his life. His father sometimes picks him up and holds him for a few minutes to display him to a visitor, but he soon returns the child to his mother, especially if he starts to cry. A mother never entrusts her young infant to an older brother or sister to hold, even for a short while, unless she is near to supervise. Next to the mother herself, her co-wife cares for a child more frequently than any other person. It is she who usually holds the infant when the mother needs a short respite from the constant care. The only other persons who are allowed to touch the child are its grandparents, its father's *brothers* and *sisters*, its *mother's brothers*, and the spouses of these persons; but to be held by them is a rare occurrence. The mother stands out as by far the most important figure in the infant's life—a person essential to his very existence.

Sickness is the chief source of anxiety for a Kwoma infant. The mother, successful in bringing about the reduction of other discomforts, knows no efficient means of coping with most of the diseases which her child contracts. Indeed, one method employed to cure minor ills increases the infant's pain instead of reducing it. If he complains of a headache

* Masturbation and biting the mother's nipple may be two other exceptions to the rule of complete facilitation. All informants stated firmly that an infant is never punished.

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The rules of sexual etiquette regulating staring and indecorous postures hold in adulthood. The aged, however, need not be so careful in this respect. In particular, an aged man or woman may embrace when greeting a person of the opposite sex, behavior denied them since infancy. 834 885 888

The levirate operates when a woman's husband dies. Although not absolutely bound by this custom, the widow normally marries the oldest man of her husband's lineage and generation. If she chooses to marry someone else, the man whom she marries must pay a bride-price to her levirate inheritor. 587

When a woman dies, the following rules govern the behavior of her husband and relatives. If she dies shortly after she has married and before the bride-price has been paid, her husband need not pay for her. If he has already paid the bride-price, her relatives are obliged to return it in full or in part or else to provide another wife from their lineage. If her death was due to her husband's negligence, however, he must pay the bride-price and cannot demand compensation from her relatives. When a woman dies after she has borne children, her husband or her sons must pay a small amount of shell money to her brothers in order to maintain the mother's-brother-sister's-son relationship, a payment completely distinct from the bride-price transactions. If this payment is not made, the two kinship groups behave toward one another thenceforth as non-relatives. 768 583 [602]

A man may marry as many women as he can win and pay for. While I was at Kwoma, out of a population of approximately 375, one man had four wives, and two had three. The rest of the adult males had either two or one in about equal numbers; only the aged and recently widowed had none. 595 •

Soon after a man marries he must build a house of his own, as custom no longer permits him to escape wind and rain by living in his father's house. To do this he must first gather food for a work-bee feast, and then call on his relatives to help him. Since a feast must be prepared for each day's work, 591 342 476 [885]

tribes because War's wife had accused him of attempting to rape her. Had he stayed, War might have killed him. 000

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the hands of a sorcerer. As soon as the mother is able, she takes care of the baby and nurses it.[40] Both parents show special concern for the child until his fontanel closes,[41] as they believe that he is particularly susceptible to sorcery during this time. For this reason the mother stays at home and does not receive visitors. The father, in order to insure the child's safety during this period, does not chew betel, or scratch himself except with a stick, and he holds his cigarettes between tweezers.[42]

Under certain circumstances, when the parents do not wish to bring up an infant, they may either offer it for adoption or kill it. If a woman gives birth to a monstrosity, she disposes of it as soon as it is born. She treats one of twins in the same way. Parents may decide not to bring up a normal child when there are already several children of one sex in the family and the new baby is of the same sex. If the children are all girls, for example, there will be no one to inherit the land nor to protect and care for the parents in their old age, so the mother may offer for adoption or kill a new girl infant in order to free herself more quickly to produce another child with the hope that it be a boy. Similarly, a boy infant may be killed or offered for adoption if the previous children are all male, since it will be very difficult to obtain sufficient shell money to pay for their wives if they have no sisters. The optimal family, therefore, is one in which boys and girls are equally balanced. Infanticide and adoption are employed to approximate this ratio.

The mother has full responsibility for the immediate physical care of her offspring during infancy. For the first few months she permits no one else to handle the infant, but after this she allows her co-wife to give her short respites. She may permit the father, uncle, or aunt to hold the infant for a few moments for their amusement, but she rarely intrusts it to

[40] The above information was obtained from male informants and hence is incomplete and not necessarily reliable.

[41] Informants described this as "when the baby's heart stops beating on the top of his head."

[42] A man observes these same taboos when he plants yams.

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dominant. By this time the other adult women of the hamlet also belong to it by marriage, and her status is thus at least as high as theirs. There is considerable rivalry and dissension between the wives of *brothers*, arising both from sexual jealousy and from economic disputes. Aggression between a woman and her husband's *brother's* wife is usually on the verbal level, but in this sphere she is considerably more expressive than her husband. In any dispute between two households, the voices of the women usually rise above those of the men. On the other hand, a woman depends on the wives of her husband's *brothers* for much of her intimate social participation. In the afternoons and particularly in the evenings, these women visit one another and gossip of the day's events.

An important social relationship which a woman experiences but a man does not is that between a woman and her co-wife. Although the culture rules that they should not fight one another, but live together amicably and cooperate in the household duties, there is considerable antagonism between them. A woman seldom expresses her anger directly toward her co-wife, for to do so would bring punishment from her husband. If his wives fight he stands ready to beat the one who was responsible or both of them if he cannot decide who is to blame. Sexual jealousy and the difficulty of fairly allocating the economic tasks of the household create a strong pressure in opposition to this sanction. The following case demonstrates one of the techniques which a Kwoma woman uses to express her aggression toward a co-wife. Wof, a middle-aged man, had one wife, Kaya. Shortly after I arrived he inherited his deceased brother's wife, Chinuwa, by the rules of levirate marriage. Kaya was not pleased with the prospect of having another woman share her husband and protested vigorously to Wof. On the eve of the wedding she argued vociferously with her husband and, when she could not dissuade him, wailed bitterly. After Chinuwa came to live in the household, the two wives seldom spoke to one another, and when they did, they were coldly polite. Instead of being openly aggressive toward Chinuwa, Kaya disparaged

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595 578 her behind her back and finally, a month or so after the marriage, accused her of stealing sorcery material. Wof's store of sago flour had been tampered with. Kaya told her husband that she had seen Chinuwa in the vicinity of the food store that morning. When Chinuwa returned to the house, Wof confronted her with Kaya's charge, but Chinuwa hotly denied it and threatened to leave Wof if he believed any more malicious gossip about her. Although Chinuwa may have taken a bit of sago flour to hold as sorcery material over Wof's head, it is much more probable that Kaya engineered the scheme to make Wof angry and suspicious of his new wife. Despite such conflicts, Kwoma co-wives are usually quite amicable. Each has her separate fire and does her own cooking. Each is allotted a special part of the garden to care for. If a dispute arises concerning their coöperative activity, the husband acts as arbiter.

602 [595] [601] A woman's relationship to other relatives need only be briefly sketched. She acts in a motherly way toward the children of her co-wife, and toward the children of her husband's *brothers*. She calls her father's *sister's* children *son* or *daughter* and mothers them even though they may be older than she. She is kindly toward the children of her *brother*, calling them niece and nephew. She rarely sees her *sisters*, since they are not permitted to marry into the same hamlet.

[582] [591] Thus a Kwoma man lives in a hamlet surrounded by relatives with whom he is comparatively safe, who coöperate with him and support him, and who share with him common interests and goals. He is bound to the other hamlets of his sib by [628] [619] patrilineal ties and to the hamlets of other sibs of the subtribe through ties with his *sisters*, his *maternal uncles*, his *paternal aunts*, his wife's relatives, his *friends*, and his ceremonial *father* and *son*. Each of these bonds implies reciprocal obligations, some of which are economic but all of which are protective and friendly. A woman lives with her children among her affines. [628] She maintains throughout her life a close tie with the hamlet of her birth through the strong bond that she has with her parents and her *brothers*, and she also has havens of safety and friendship in other hamlets with her

582 615 have no connection is number one, your mother's number two, and your father's number three in preference. To marry outside the tribe was all right. In his particular case, he had been a Waskuk lad adopted by a Bangus family. The taboo worked for him both in regard to his own and to his adopted family's social groups, so there was a taboo phratrie for him in both Bangus and Waskuk. [595] He actually had two wives, one a Bangus and the other a Waskuk, but each of them were members of the preferred phratrie.

123 When he left after the morning's work, we gave him a bottle of bay rum and a paring knife for his bananas; he went away apparently very pleased.

124 [622] [648] [191] [619] In the afternoon, Sowinambi, the Bangus luluai (a chief appointed by the Australians) came to visit. He is one of the older men of influence, and we were pleased to see that he was very friendly toward us. He knows only a few words of pidgin, but by a combination of that and the little Waskuk that we know, we were able to get a check on the phratries and their names, and also the social divisions of the other tribes of the culture area, Tongwishamp, Urambanj and Koriasi. According to him the first and last have four divisions each, and Urambanj only two. The native names for these phratries is korowa. Our attempts to get his genealogy were not very successful.

423 The property question is going to be fun. In getting the names of geographical features, particularly mountains nearby, we've been told by some that they belong to individuals, and by others that they belong to the tribe as a whole. A Waskuk told me that all the biggest mountains were his peoples' and that the Bangus owned one measly little hill near the swamp.

103 The Sepik, a few curving miles of which we can see down below between the Ambunti and Wasoku ranges is called nambu.

114 People on the coast can hear our groans of despair whenever we stop and go over our special problems, wondering if we'll ever get evidence which is pertinent to them. Our discouragement however, is not official.

412 [402] The stone adze is the most all-important tool and is usually carried about over the shoulder wherever a man may go. Other tools are a hafted hardwood pestle for crushing sago pith, pig's tooth scrapers and engraver, 323 bird bone needle, bamboo knife, coconut shell dipper, etc. Pottery is made 286 by the coiled method without kick. Net bags are made from bark string. There is 285 no basketry. A rectangular engraved wooden shield or an oval pigskin 714 shield is used in war. A pointed bamboo spear is used for hunting both 411 heads and pigs, the cassowary bone dagger for a hand to hand struggle.

291 Clothing for both sexes is nil. Ornaments consist of feathered plumes, 301 bamboo combs, nose plugs of dogs teeth or bamboo, shell necklaces, and plaited leg and arm bands.

304 Both sexes have their ear lobes pierced but not extended, and the septum pierced. The alae of men are usually pierced in addition. Both sexes are cicitrised with a bamboo knife, the men have two half moons cut just above each nipple, the women a circular design around the navel. [881] (Boys are initiated into manhood by having their tongues and penises slashed.)

836 The only restriction to premarital sexual intercourse is that it is 584 carried on as a sort of intrigue unknown to the parents. The girl takes the initiative in this as she does in the proposal of marriage. (This does not include infant betrothal which takes place in only part of the marriages).

848 In the case of an illegitimate birth, the child is adopted or killed. One 947 of twins or a monstrosity meets the same fate... There is 845 bride price, patrilocal 583 marriage, patrilineal decent, polygyny. 591 611

595 There is a cult of all adult men, whose esoteria are carved and painted 794 figures, the blowing of sacred flutes and the beating of gongs. There are [532] two progressive stages to this cult. The first step of these is either [534] minisma or yenama; half the youths being introduced into one, and half into the other, placement being determined partly by patrilineal inheritance and

838 finger at him. Later I asked May if sodomy was the fashion among the Kwoma. He replied that it was the custom of the Marham (tribe from which Wisep [829] came). Then I asked him if the Hongwem understood this, and he said, "I think?" and walked away. He did not seem to be embarrassed or shocked, but did not like to talk about it.

578 Ovivep, Wisep and Marur went in to the station. May just came in with
602 his net bag, (bilum) which was empty except for a broken glass (the one which Bob had given him). He was quite upset. Fit, it seems, in revenge for yesterday's fight had emptied his bag, stolen a knife and a spoon from it, and broken the mirror, and then had left to stay with his mother who lived in Wenya (his mother was formerly married to Mar's father's younger brother). May had told Mar's mother about this, and she had railed about the incident. This is not a thing that brothers should do. She told May to wait until Fit came back and then get his net bag and do the same to it. This May plans to do.

I went to visit Wof. He and his wife were there sitting in the [123] porch section. Wof got up and greeted me very warmly and obsequiously.

123 Wof sat down and began scowling. His wife was preoccupied and did not
593 greet me as effusively as usual. Kum was standing at the side of the
595 house with his back to us, and Kaya (Wof's first wife) spoke to him sharply, scolded him for something, and I noticed that he was sobbing quietly. I asked what was the matter, and May said that his mother had gone away, and he was crying for her (May had joined in the scolding and so had Wof). Mes who was sitting there said, "Oh, don't do that."

Kum had been sitting on a log in front of the house, and now he started wandering around the porch. Wof barked at him, and he sat down quickly looking very sheepish and scared. (May told me later that he, Kum,

123 593 595 had stolen some of Wof's tobacco that morning and he had scolded him for this). "Stop wandering about the house, you little thief". Hum said nothing but soon announced that he was going and asked me if I was coming too.

123 [613] [252] I left and went down to War's house. He was asleep in the porch on a sago slab with a head rest when I got there. His wife was sitting by the fire frying sago fritters. War got up slowly and greeted me, putting his arm lightly across my shoulders. Then he brushed off the slab seat (also a couch) for me, and we sat down on it. His wife greeted me warmly. I asked about Kis and Kar; they were both still in the bush. A little later Kis's no. 2 wife came in. She is a well-built woman of about 19. [482] She was carrying a heavily laden net bag with coconuts, sugar cane, native spinach and large leaves used to wrap boiled sago. She sat down on a box [621] across the room from us and talked with War and his wife. The talk was of daily happenings. I could not understand it very well, but there was [522] an air of pleasantry and light laughter. Once she said something that struck them all as amusing, and she thrust her hands down over her genitals and rocked back and forth in glee. All the time they were talking, War sat with his back to the women looking out of the house. He never looked at her directly. She would look at me furtively every once in a while, and if I caught her glance, she would giggle and look away quickly. Hum and [524] Knos had brought a ball with them. Once it rolled to where Sungay was now sitting by the other fire frying sago fritters. I put my hand out for her [152] to throw it back. She became very embarrassed, laughed foolishly, looked away, threw it, and then covered her face with her hands , her breasts [522] with her elbows and drew her legs up. War and his wife laughed heartily at her embarrassment.

578 and telling her that she was no good and that he thought he would drive her out of the house or spear her. I asked Hey if he liked Chinuwa, and he said no; he was afraid of being sorcerized too.

593 Then he told me of War who had been sorcerized by his second wife.
595 He had speared her in the leg and cut her with a bamboo on the arm, and
754 after that she was good. He was careful to spear her in the leg so as not to kill her. According to Hey, this often happened in the case of the no. 2 wife. The first wife usually loved her husband and did not sorcerize him. This also is what happened if one married a woman, and she did not marry her husband of her own free will.

000 Now, a couple of hours later, Wof has just come up to the house and seems in excellent spirits. He hugged Hamb, went up and greeted Hamb's wife, and came in where I was writing. He then went out and sat glumly in the cook house.

753 February 4, 1937. Wof came up today with a big sick. His head and stomach were pained, and he asked for medicine. He had no fever, but looked pale. Someone was sorcerizing him (this might have been predicted from yesterday). I tried to pump Hey, but he was no help about yesterday's business.

123 I went to see Marok but found he had gone into the bush. Then I
[854] stopped in at "Grilly's" house. His wife was sitting on the porch with an infant girl in her lap asleep. She gave me a coconut. The 'lapun' in the next house was working something from a cassowary bone. His wife was
[231] working on a fish net. They have three cats which they call puss.

Then I came back. A couple of women came by; they stopped and greeted me. I was doing card tricks for some children and told them to come in and watch. They giggled a bit and came in, stood in the doorway and

000 is sold to me. When the Tangwishamp bring <u>favorbi</u>, they expect a knife for
435 a bunch containing 20 or 30 nuts, the equivalent of 2 large bunches of
276 bananas, or a net bag of yams.)

754 Nar, Waramus, Way, Wof, and Kar have gone to Sowinambi's for <u>punga kafasawani</u> (sorcery court). Mas and Mey came back from shooting with one gouria pigeon. Mey left his net bag and found a bundle of nettles in it.
826 Mas explained that Mey got them to scrape his penis to make it and him
856 grow. Later I asked Mey what they were. He laughed, embarrassed and would not answer. "Something bilong me". Owiyap explained that this was the "fashion of monkis" -- that he was big "finish" and did not do it any more.

685 Mey reported this afternoon that Pit had stolen a knife from his net bag and gone to his mother's.

838 Kar came up tonight, played the homosexual game with Owiyap, and put him down, spread his legs apart and spit on his penis--much to the delight of all. Mas berated Mey for running away and not helping Owiyap "fashion no good." Yat came at supper time, and he, Marok and Kar ate most of the
595 gouria pigeon. Kar is making arrangements to get a third wife. Mar is kidding him about it.

Owiyap heard that Gauwi, Sowinambi's daughter, on whom he had designs,
584 said that if he married the Urambanj girl to whom he was bethrothed she would kill her. This pleased Owiyap who said he was going to break his engagement with the girl from Urambanj.

752 Knos was playing with a cold cartridge, lighting the powder. I had demonstrated burning gun powder at noon. It did not light at once when he tried it, so he leaned over to blow it, and it went off, burning his face badly, closing both eyes. Mas had warned him. They all blamed him, scolded him for being careless,

March 27, 1937.

856 [123] Gwiyap and Fit asked if I had ever cut my genitals and scraped them with nettles. When I replied in the negative they inquired how was it that I had come to grow. They were so convinced that this is essential to growth that they were very surprised that white men could grow without it.

April 5, 1937.

838 171 Sodomy is not openly practiced, however Gwiyap says that it is practiced at Yambon.

*115 When I talk with him about the attractiveness of Kwiya or Awa, although at first he talked avidly, he now seems embarrassed and changes the subject.

601 • 595 If a man has two wives the child calls them both ave (mother) unless the other wife is a widow of an uncle. Then he calls her amve or navelaka (younger uncle and elder aunt, respectively).

593 833 Intercourse after marriage is at the wife's instigation and not the man's.

April 13, 1937.

*115 291 Last night Gwiyap was sitting in the mosqeito netting and took off his "lap lap." He said he liked to walk about thus--he did not like to wear it.

*115 123 829 Talk turned to America, and he asked me alot of questions, particularly about the status of black skins in America. I told him that they had houses and money, and worked just as white people do, and tried to convey that their status there was much higher in relation to whites than it was in New Guinea. He asked me if black boys married white women. I said that they sometimes did. Gwiyap said that he would like to go to America and stay there. He said, "If I go to America, I'll be all-a same masta," (just like a white man).

*115 787 He had a long dream last night. A woman had died and was on a platform. He did not know who she was except that her name was Tumakwo. Way was stabbing this woman with a rope which has the point of a spear. His daughter came up and held Gwiyap by the arms and asked him to come with her into the bush, as she did not like what her father was doing.